



# Building, Planning Economic Development Service Review Background Report

“The good will of the governed will be starved if not fed by the good deeds of the governors.”

[Ben Franklin \(1706-1790\)](#)



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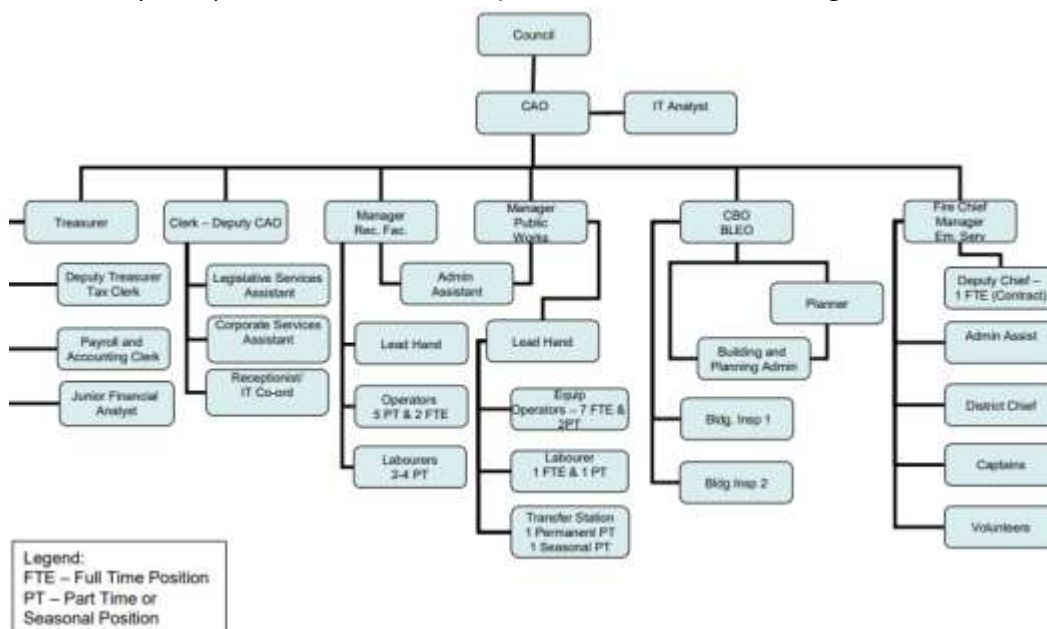
## 1.0 Service Review Context

The [Township of Douro-Dummer](#) is located in central [Peterborough County](#) immediately northeast of the City of Peterborough. Amalgamated in 1998 Douro-Dummer's population of 7,632 people in the [2021 Census](#) was up 13.8% from 2016, higher than the 6.8% County growth rate at the time. The [2022 County Growth Analysis](#) projected a 2% growth rate to 2026 for a Township population of 7,950, proposed to grow to 8,410 by 2051.

The [Township Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#) promotes a Vision recognizing the beauty of nature, sustainable environmental practices, attracting and retaining small businesses, fostering community sense of pride and belonging, and active communication and collaboration with residents. Core Values include Fiscal Responsibility, Service Excellence, Transparency, and Environment, built upon the following Strategic Pillars:

- service modernization and innovation (monitor and improves services and processes, website update, document management, online community engagement)
- business attraction, expansion and retention (storytelling, community signage, zoning by-law, incentives to business), and
- infrastructure renewal.

Douro-Dummer is served by a [Mayor, Deputy Mayor and three Councillors](#), including one member at large, one representing the former Douro Township Ward and another the Dummer Township Ward. The Township Mayor and Deputy Mayor are members of [Peterborough County Council](#). The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) heads the Township Administration working between Council and Staff.



The [2026 Budget Presentation](#) organizational structure on the previous page shows six Departments reporting to the CAO. Currently the staff roster shows 34 full-time positions (including 8 FTE Operators in Public Works) and 10 part-time or seasonal employees (primarily in Recreation and Facilities).

## **2.0 Service Review Purpose**

The Township requested a service delivery review of its current Building, By-law and Planning Services, and an assessment of whether an economic development service might be considered in the future. The Township Request for Proposal is for a quantifiable, and forward-looking strategy for its building, by-law, planning and economic development services by reviewing current services levels and delivery methods, evaluating internal processes and budget allocations, and assessing legislative obligations.

The service delivery review is informed by feedback from users of the service, citizens, cottage associations and other stakeholders along with Township Staff and members of Council. The final report will include performance measures and assist staff and Council in making informed strategic decisions regarding how Building & By-law Services and Planning & Economic Development Departments will best serve the community. Triton Engineering Services is completing this review in the following phases:

### **1. Background**

- Review organization structure, base information, questionnaires, stakeholder interviews
- Launch web material and feedback loop
- Consent agenda report 1
- Survey Comparator Municipalities
- Draft background Report, Initial Council Presentation

### **2. Public Engagement**

- Public Open House, Initial Council Presentation
- Follow Up questionnaires and interviews
- Consent agenda report 2

### **3. Analysis**

- Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats and Risk Assessment
- Background report update
- Consent agenda report 3

### **4. Reporting**

- First draft Service Delivery Review Framework Report
- One service Analysis Report (Building, Planning, By-law, Economic Development)
  - a) current service delivery method, performance measures
  - b) potential changes to the services



- c) new services, service delivery methods and/or service levels
- d) cost/budget implications
- recommendations to improve responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness
- Final Public Meeting
- Second draft Service Delivery Review with Summary of Preliminary Recommendations
- Final Report, Presentation for Council Approval June 30<sup>th</sup>

### 3.0 Service Review 2020

In [2020 WSCS Consulting](#) completed a Service Review on behalf of the Township. It proposed 74 opportunities suggesting a roadmap to sustainability, improved customer service, and better morale achieved within 3 to 5 years with \$1.1 million investment in technology and training. Funded by the Provincial Municipal Modernization Fund, the study noted the Township was at a critical juncture due to the departure of long serving managers. Similar to many studies at that time it supported creation of a shared service task force with the County and lower tiers focusing on almost all Township services including development/building/by-law.

The study provided recommendations to eliminate duplication, improve use of technology, enhance service quality, and identify new revenue sources and cost savings. Opportunities were grouped into categories of Governance, Organization, Technology and Process, Management and Performance, Customer Service and Facilities Management. Below is a summary of recommendations.

Service Delivery Review - Recommendations



Among the recommendations, the study prioritized increased long-term planning through a new Strategic Plan with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound objectives. The study supported improved Council-staff relationship, updating the Procedural By-law, increased Council training, better agenda planning, and a focus on shared services with other lower tiers. Related to

building, planning and by-law services the study recommends a shared service review with nearby lower tiers to share software and resources.

## **4.0 Building and Planning Department Overview**

The Building and Planning Department structure evolved from changeover in the Chief Building Official (CBO) and Planner positions in the last few years as illustrated in the following Organizational Structure.



The CBO/Department Head manages two Building Inspectors, one Planner and one Administrator assisting with both building and planning work. In addition to building permits, the CBO and Inspectors cover plumbing inspections, septic permits and re-inspection (Source Water Management), by-law enforcement, livestock evaluation.

Township planning work is fulfilled by a Planner, a part time Building and Planning Administrator, and support from private consulting. The service includes zoning plan review for building permits, pre-consultations on proposed development applications, site plan approval, minor variances, re-zoning considered at the Township level, plus supporting land division, Official Plan amendments and subdivision/condominium applications at Peterborough County.

The following summarizes legislative and qualification obligations for the Building and Planning Service.

### **4.1 Building, Bylaw and Septic Services**

Primary work areas for the building section include (Ontario Building Code, Building Code Act):

- Building permit intake, plan review, permit issuance, inspections, compliance, final
- Septic permit intake, plans review, permit issuance, inspections including re-inspection related to Source Water Protection initiatives
- By-law enforcement, Property Standards and other municipal compliance issues including livestock evaluation

The Township building service uses the [Cloud Permit](#) system. The following sections outline some of the legislative authority for building services work.

### **Building Code Act**

Under Section 1.1 of the [Building Code Act](#) roles of parties involved in the construction process include:

1. *Persons* constructing a building are to ensure their project meets the Code, to obtain a permit, and to ensure qualified insured contractors carry out work.
2. *Designers* must submit plans that comply with Code, provide documentation needed to allow plans to be reviewed, only do work they are qualified for, and to monitor during construction.
3. *Builders* agree not to construct without a permit, to meet permit specifications, apply compliant construction “techniques”, and to notify inspectors and designers if issues arise.
4. *Manufacturers* must ensure products supplied for construction meet Code
5. *Building Owners* are to maintain completed construction according to the Code and to keep any documents and records about the building.
6. *Building Condition Evaluators* are to conduct inspections on parts of a building they are qualified to investigate.
7. *Registered Code Agencies* review plans, issue certificates, inspect and other functions according to Code and are to only do work qualified to complete.
8. *Chief Building Officials* must set policies to enforce the Code, coordinate and oversee Code enforcement, perform duties assigned under the Building Code Act, and complete duties “in an independent manner” according to standards in the Code of Conduct.
9. *Inspectors* review plans, scrutinise construction, conduct maintenance inspections, and issue orders under the Code if they are qualified to do so, and to work “in an independent manner”.

Section 3(1) states the Council of each municipality are to enforce the Building Code Act except where some other party is specifically responsible. Subsection (2) requires Council to “appoint a CBO and Building Inspectors, which shall be verified by a certificate of appointment” issued by the Clerk. This part of the Act also allows local municipalities to do joint enforcement, including jointly with an upper tier. Municipalities must also retain all records. Section 3.1 (1) through (7) contain similar responsibilities and obligations regarding “sewage system” inspections. The Act also contains requirements for appointing “registered code agencies” to enforce the Code.

Section [6.1 \(1\) of the Building Code Act](#) outlines responsibilities for plumbing inspections under the Building Code. Plumbing inspectors are appointed with the same powers regarding plumbing installations as a Chief Building Official except for conditional permits.

### **Building By-law 2024-031 Code of Conduct**

Section 10 of [Building By-law 2024-031](#) references the Code of Conduct for building officials as well as specific authorities and processes for plans and specifications, alternative solutions, fees, refunds, notices, permit revocation, sewage maintenance inspection, and enforcement.



The Chief Building Official, building and plumbing inspectors must operate under the Code Conduct under Section [7.1\(1\) of the Building Code Act](#). A Code of Conduct is to promote standards of behaviour, prevent abuse of power, and ensure honesty and integrity in exercising power under the Act. A Code of Conduct is to be made available to the public (7.1(4)). Some municipalities refer to the overall code of conduct for building officials. [North Kawartha](#) has a specific code of conduct for building officials.

Douro-Dummer's Chief Building Official Code of Conduct, noted in Section 10 of the [Township Building By-law](#) refers to Policy 1.1 (b). Policy 1.1 (b), is separate from the Township Code of Conduct for Council and other staff and applies only to the CBO and inspectors appointed under the Act. These officials must also comply with any other Municipal Code of Conduct. Policy 1.1 (b) contains investigation and disciplinary process applicable to complaints against Building Officials who are to conduct their work according to the following principles:

1. Act in Public Interest regarding safety of building works & structures
2. Not to act if there may "reasonably appear" to be a conflict between duties to employer, profession, peers, and public in their personal issues.
3. Apply by-laws, codes, and standards equally and "without favour"
4. Examine plans and conduct inspections impartially according to professional standards.
5. Abide by moral and ethical standards avoiding disreputable conduct
6. Comply with the Building Code Act, Ontario Building Code, and other applicable law.
7. Act within their area of expertise.
8. Maintain accreditations to act as a Building Official.
9. Continuously update knowledge and understanding related to by-laws, codes, practices etc.
10. Extend professional courtesy.

### **[Building Official Registration Requirements](#)**

Unlike almost every other municipal administrative position, Building Official have a provincially mandated registration and qualification system that includes exams and registration in the [QuARTS](#) (Qualification and Registration Tracking System). The [Ontario Building Code Summary](#) contains various links to the 2024 Building Code, process to obtain comply with qualification requirements, study guides for required exams and information on the [Building Inspector Internship Program](#).

To qualify and practice in the building and development sector a building practitioner must:

1. [pass examinations](#) for each of their practices
2. [register with the Ministry](#) of Municipal Affairs and Housing through the Qualification and Registration Tracking System (QuARTS)
3. pay the [annual fees](#)

All registered practitioners and their qualifications are listed in the [QuARTS Public Search Registry](#). This process not only applies to municipal building officials but designers and other professions and



firms in the building industry. The Chief Building Official and two Building Inspectors all have the required qualifications in their area of expertise and are identified in the [QuARTS](#) registry.

### ***By-law Enforcement***

The Township Strategic Plan does not reference by-law enforcement as a core value or even part of the strategic pillar. There is no one staff member identified as the By-law Enforcement Officer. The CBO and two inspectors have all enforced by-laws from time to time.

The Township complaint based enforcement system is primarily initiated through a [Complaint Form](#) on the [Township Website](#). The website refers to its [By-law Complaint Handling Policy](#) which focusses on service related complaints about municipal service or staff issues through Public Sector Accountability legislation from 2014-15. The website also references the Ontario Provincial Police for after hours enforcement of the [Noise By-law](#). The Township [Property Standards By-law](#) was adopted in 1999. It is also enforced through a complaint based system.

The Municipal Law Enforcement of Ontario ([MLEO](#)) is a non-profit organization that certifies professionals involved in by-law enforcement practices. No staff members are members of [MLEO](#).

## **4.2 Planning Services**

Primary work areas for the land use planning services include (Ontario Planning Act):

- Pre-consultation on proposed new development all types of Planning Act applications
- Zoning By-law interpretation, plan review, amendment processes and recommendation
- Committee of Adjustment application processes and recommendations
- Site Plan Approval plan review, processing, and implementation
- County Land Division Committee application review, support, and recommendation
- Official Plan Amendment application review, support, and recommendation
- County Draft Plan of Subdivision application review, support, and recommendation

### **Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act 1994 (OPPI)**

The Act put in place the legislative background for the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) and the Registered Professional Planners (RPP) designation. This designation is not a legal requirement to do planning work in Ontario, but to use the RPP designation you must meet the minimum education and experience requirements of the Planners Institute and pass an exam. The current planning staff member is close to obtaining the RPP designation. The MCIP initials that appear before the RPP designation is acknowledgment of membership in the Canadian Planner's Institute.

Although based on legislation, the RPP designation is not legally mandated like the BCIN numbers issued to the CBO and Building Inspectors, who must by law carry their designation in order to perform work in their area of expertise. However, most municipalities require the RPP designation as



part of the job requirements, young planners are encouraged to obtain it, and once obtained the member has access to insurance, support and other resource benefits from the Professional Institute.

Once the RPP designation is obtained, registered professional planners must maintain their designation by reporting 36 annual learning units certified by the organization.

### **[Ontario Planning Act RSO 1990 c.P. 13](#)**

This Act and associated regulations specifies legal practices and procedures that must be followed with all work completed on zoning by-laws, minor variances, official plan amendments, subdivisions, consents, and other activities. The approval authority for Planning Act applications processed in the Department are as follows:

- Peterborough County (Council, Senior Staff) Official Plan Amendments, Subdivisions, Consents (Land Division Committee)
- Township Council Zoning By-law Amendments, minor variances (Committee of Adjustment), [Site Plan Approvals By-law 2025-09](#) Chief Administrative Officer or Chief Building Official

## **4.3 Economic Development Services**

[Ontario Municipal Act Section 11\(3\)](#) places economic development services within the lower tier sphere of jurisdiction, which permits local municipalities like Douro-Dummer to offer economic development services at Council's discretion. Section 11(2) does assign "Economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality, including respecting climate change" to upper tiers. The Act defines "economic development services" as promoting the municipality for any purpose by disseminating information on of the municipality by the municipality for any purpose by the collection and dissemination as well as "the acquisition, development and disposal of sites" for "industrial, commercial and institutional uses."

The Township does not have a staff member dedicated to economic development services. The Township Chief Administrative Officer and Clerk/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer provide that function as it stands. The CAO has economic development qualifications and previous professional experience, while the CAO's office provides community development initiatives such as administering the community grants program, and providing administrative and organizational support for events, parades and similar citizen supported activities. Similarly, Otonabee-South Monaghan and Trent Lakes also assign economic development work to the CAO/Clerk or CAO.

The Peterborough [County Report October 2025](#) described the formation of the in-house economic development team and a proposed [GROW Economic Development Plan](#). The Plan notes the importance of working with local lower tier economic development staff where they exist. Only Cavan Monahan, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen, North Kawartha, and Selwyn have a dedicated position to economic development services.

Economic development staff employed by municipalities are not subject to legally mandated testing and certification like Building Officials, and do not have the legislative status offered by the RPP designation for planning staff. However, most municipal economic development staff are members of the [Economic Development Council of Ontario \(EDCO\)](#), a which provides professional development opportunities, awards, conferences and other support for staff and member municipalities offering this service. The current Township CAO has been a long standing member of EDCO.

#### **4.4 Clerk’s Treasury, Police, Fire Services**

Examples of some interactions between the Building and Planning Department and other corporate services include:

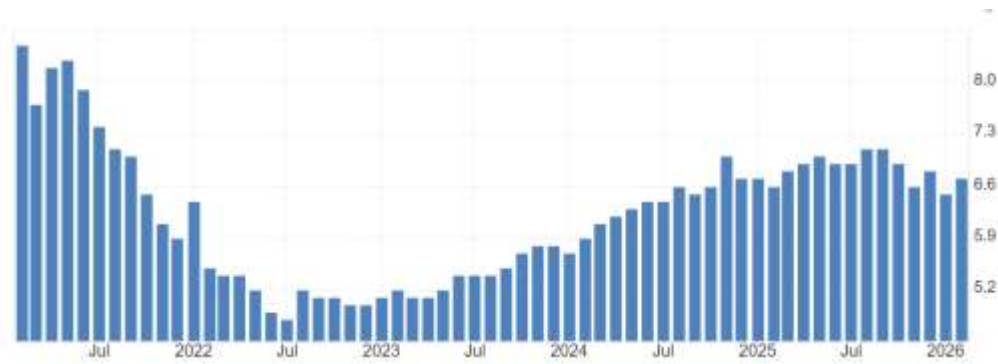
- Mailing of notices,
- Website updates
- By-law enforcement noise after hours (OPP)
- Livestock evaluations (confirm)
- Line Fences Act
- Exotic animal by-law
- Financial Reporting Treasury Department

Building, By-law and Planning services personnel have significant interactions with the Fire Chief to enforce the [Fire Protection and Prevention Act](#). The interaction is facilitated through comments from the Chief on planning applications, building permit applications and in particular through the site plan control process. There input is also mandatory on Part 3 Commercial and Industrial buildings and some Part 9 buildings which could benefit from additional fire safety protections such as water storage. The Fire Department operates using the [FirePro2 Software](#).

#### **5.0 Service Review 2026 Economic Context**

The Building, Planning and By-law Service Review is being completed in an economic context much different than conditions that existing in 2020. International, national, provincial, regional and local conditions provide background within which Council must make decisions on the Building, Planning and By-law Services, and the extent to which economic development services might be expanded.

According to various sources Canada’s unemployment as of February 2026 is 6.7% ([Trading Economics](#)). [Trading Economics](#) chart below shows the change in Canada’s unemployment rates since the last service review in 2020.



Statistics Canada reports an Ontario unemployment rate in February 2026 of 7.6%, up 0.3% from January. Peterborough County’s unemployment rate is reported at closer to the national rate of 6.7%. Unemployment rates up to 4% are considered “full employment” where all that can participate in the workforce are employed. A rate below 4% is considered a labour shortage.

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing [CMHC 2026 Ontario Forecast](#) regional overview suggests the following market trends:

- Slow positive economic growth, declining unemployment, improved affordability
- International trade tensions create uncertainty making homebuyers cautious
- Existing home sales to rise with income growth, lower prices and lower mortgage costs
- High resale inventory weaken housing prices predicted to increase 2027 and 2028
- Rental supply increased, reduced temporary population lead to higher vacancy rates

[Ontario's Building More Homes Initiative](#) involved improving housing unit creation with a view to building 1.5 million homes in 10 years. The website notes that housing starts province wide had fallen below annual targets despite numerous legislative initiatives such as stronger mayor powers, Build Faster Fund, grants to modernize and streamline processes, increasing Ontario Land Tribunal support, infrastructure investment, standardized housing designs, additional unit requirements, and changes to the Planning Act to streamline appeals and procedures.

Provincial initiatives have changed the legislative landscape within which staff in Building, By-law, and Planning. All municipal staff across Ontario have had to adjust processes to keep up with legislative changes, taking away from day to day activities in Departments. The following summarizes the changes to legislation in the past and on-going.

### Key Planning Act Bills Since 2022

- **[Bill 109, More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022](#)**: Introduced mandatory training for municipal planners, allowed for the refund of application fees if decisions are delayed, and amended site plan control processes.

- **[Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022](#)**: A major overhaul aimed at building 1.5 million homes by 2031. It allowed up to three units "as-of-right" on many residential lots, reduced parkland dedication requirements, changed development charges, and restricted conservation authorities' input on planning applications.
- **[Bill 112, Hazel McCallion Act \(Peel Dissolution\), 2023](#)**: Initiated the restructuring of the Region of Peel into single-tier municipalities, affecting regional planning oversight.
- **[Bill 185, Cutting Red Tape to Build More Homes Act, 2024](#)**: Introduced to further streamline approvals by limiting third-party appeal rights, removing parking minimums near transit, and modifying how development charges are applied.
- **[Bill 17, Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025](#)**: Aims to accelerate transit-oriented development and infrastructure, expanding Ministerial authority over planning, development charges, and construction.

### **Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) with Planning Act Focus**

As of April 2026, the ERO has several active, open, and recently updated proposals concerning the *Planning Act*, largely focused on housing, infrastructure, and streamlining approvals.

- **[ERO #025-0461: Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025 \(Decision Posted June 25, 2025\)](#)**: Implements changes allowing for minor variances (as-of-right) for 10% setback variations on specific urban residential lands.
- **[ERO #026-0310: Proposal to reform site plan control \(March 30, 2026 – May 14, 2026\)](#)**: Seeks to reform site plan control under the *Planning Act* and the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* to streamline development.
- **[ERO #026-0311 Proposed Regulatory Approach to Establish a Minimum Residential Lot Size in Urban Areas](#)**: Mandate a 175 square metre minimum lot area for one family dwellings where municipal water and sewer is available.
- **[ERO 026-0312 Proposed Changes to Support Standardizing of Parkland Requirements Under the Planning Act](#)**: Permit developers to include privately owned public space and appeal to the OLT if municipality does not accept developer's suggested land.
- **[ERO #026-0313: Streamlining planning information requirements \(March 30, 2026\)](#)**: Seeks feedback on a proposed list of information/material that planning authorities can require for applications to ensure consistency.
- **[ERO 026-0314 Proposed Changes to Various Regulations Under the Planning Act to Specify Additional "Prescribed Professions" for the Purposes of a Complete Application](#)**: Prescribes professions municipalities must accept technical studies and reports as part of a complete application.

- [ERO #026-0315: Consultation on upper-tier official plans, secondary plans, and site and area-specific policies \(March 30, 2026 – May 14, 2026\)](#): Proposes changes to support housing, economic development, and transportation priorities under the *Building Homes and Improving Transportation Infrastructure Act, 2026*.
- [ERO 026-0426 Proposed Regulation: K-12 School Planning \(Closing June 5, 2026\)](#): Proposed regulation to streamline planning approvals for publicly funded schools under the *Planning Act*.

These changes have and continue to require significant investment in staff resources to review, understand and implement. Many changes are small but impactful changing application processing times, fees and charges, and when certain approval are required. Some changes to legislation have been made and implemented only to be retracted in a subsequent bill.

[Bill 68](#) amending the Conservation Authorities Act could increase approval times and require additional follow up by Building and Planning staff to get comments and permits. The reduction of Conservation Authorities mandates by the Province removed an approval authority that could assess and comment on Environmental Impact Assessments, resulting in many municipalities increasing peer review requirements.

This service review assumes that housing renovations and construction will be moderate in 2026 and begin to recover and increase in 2027 and into the following years. Also, major legislative changes to the Planning Act or Building Code are assumed to have peaked so that there is less demand on staff resources to implement new Planning Act requirements.

## 6.0 Douro-Dummer Budget Summary, Application and Permit Statistics

### 6.1 Budget

The spreadsheet below summarizes budgeted and actual costs for Building, By-law and Planning Services for the five years before the 2026 budget.

Budget Summary												
Planning	2026		2025		2024		2023		2022		2021	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Wages Benefits	99335	96498	102026	113975	105340	114582	89216	71925	107773	60866	135515	
Contracted Service	14000	47039	9000	6744	9000	3467	4000	3864	35700	4869	35700	
Conservation Authority	123982	116221	116221	108030	108030	104563	104,453	102657	102657	99313	99313	
Other	12700	8308	11800	7601	11200	-1432	9228	-31294	20520	1842	56108	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>250017</b>	<b>268066</b>	<b>239047</b>	<b>236350</b>	<b>233570</b>	<b>221180</b>	<b>206,897</b>	<b>147152</b>	<b>266650</b>	<b>166910</b>	<b>326636</b>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>-39500</b>	<b>-63541</b>	<b>-39500</b>	<b>-46380</b>	<b>-35292</b>	<b>-32036</b>	<b>-40200</b>	<b>-22752</b>	<b>-40350</b>	<b>-46497</b>	<b>-36950</b>	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>210517</b>	<b>204525</b>	<b>199547</b>	<b>189970</b>	<b>198278</b>	<b>189144</b>	<b>166697</b>	<b>124400</b>	<b>226300</b>	<b>120413</b>	<b>289686</b>	
Building & Bylaw												
Building & Bylaw	2026		2025		2024		2023		2022		2021	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
Wages Benefits	414750	372680	437515	413278	417807	407776	556493	311623	315514	247630	245688	
Contracted Service	50600	6781	50600	27377	43000	33811	55000	61013	60000	27183	53150	
Professional Development	20064	2854	20064	11284	11575	4207	7075	6238	7000	5991	8200	
Other	82457	27077	75598	59467	70550	37344	57753	3121	51040	18548	49632	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>567871</b>	<b>409392</b>	<b>583777</b>	<b>511406</b>	<b>542932</b>	<b>483136</b>	<b>676321</b>	<b>381995</b>	<b>433554</b>	<b>299352</b>	<b>356670</b>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>-624211</b>	<b>-405458</b>	<b>-641708</b>	<b>-523218</b>	<b>-596779</b>	<b>-605271</b>	<b>-743507</b>	<b>-616402</b>	<b>-468719</b>	<b>-666119</b>	<b>-364393</b>	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
To (-) From (+) Reserve	-56340	3934	-57931	-11812	-53847	-122133	-67186	-234407	-35165	-366767	-7723	

The Planning Department 2026 budget covers 1.5 Full Time Equivalent Staff. Half of the planning service expense is the Otonabee Conservation Authority levy (\$123,982 budgeted 2026). The Authority's levy has increased over \$24,000 in five years, representing a 24% increase.

Budgeted planning revenue is \$39,500 in 2026; the same amount was budgeted in 2025 and 2021. Actual revenue exceeded the budget three of five years budgeted. Wages and benefit expense decreased annually since 2021, while contracted services in the last five years are partially offset by increased contracted services, \$21,700 less than in 2021.

The 2026 Building and Bylaw budget has \$414,750 for wages and benefits covering 3.5 full time equivalent staff. This is up over \$169,000 from 2021 when two full time equivalent positions were covered. Professional development budgets in Building has doubled, while contracted services are slightly lower than in 2021. Total budgeted revenue has increased from \$354,393 to \$624,211 in 2026. 2025 was the only year that a reserve contribution did not occur at year end. Since 2021, over \$730,000 has gone to building reserves while less than \$4,000 was pulled from reserve in 2025 to offset expense.

The building, septic, and by-law enforcement services operate on a net zero budget as required by Provincial legislation. Major expenses are Wages and Benefits for 3.5 Full time equivalent employees (\$414,750 budget 2026), contracted services of \$50,600 budgeted in 2026 (Cloud Permit) up from just



over \$9,000 in 2021, and professional development of just over \$20,000 budgeted in 2026 (maintaining certification and training of CBO and Inspectors).

Annual revenue is budgeted in 2026 at \$624,211 up from \$595,000 in 2021. In all five years revenue has exceeded budget resulting in a net increase to the building reserve every year except 2025. By legislation, the cost of the building service is to be cost recovery with surplus placed in a building reserve. The Finance Department is required to maintain and report on the building reserve according to Provincial Legislation. The basic premise being building permit revenue cannot be used to fund other areas of the municipality. The reserve contribution budgeted for in 2026 is \$56,340.

## 6.2 Permit Fee Comparison

According to Township budget documents building permit and septic fees in other municipalities were reviewed in 2023 resulting in a 12.5% increase in building permit renewal and re-inspection fees, and a 10% increase in septic inspection charges in Douro-Dummer. A public meeting is required under the Building Code Act before fees can be increased. Fees can only cover the actual cost of the service.

Triton Engineering reviewed building, septic and planning fees in the eight lower tier municipalities in the County. Some lower-tier municipalities charge permit fees based on cost of construction while other charge based on the square footage of the building or structure. Otonabee South-Monaghan, City of Peterborough, Selwyn and Havelock-Belmont-Bethune reported they are reviewing or undertaking a building permit rate study. Triton’s final report will review Township fees compared to nearby municipalities.

## 6.4 Building Permit Statistics

The Township’s administrative staff helped Triton compiled the following building permit statistics since Cloud permit was initiative.

	<u>Year</u>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b><u>Permit Type</u></b>					
Agriculture		8	7	4	8
Single Detached Dwelling		27	30	13	19
Semi Detached or Multiple Dwelling		1	0	0	0
Additional Residential Unit		3	2	1	2
Residential Alteration, Addition		26	27	19	22
Commercial Building		2	2	2	2
Demolition		12	15	11	11
Institutional		4	1	3	2
Sewage System		50	65	38	46
Pools		6	2	7	3
Change of Use		2	1	1	2
Accessory Structures		36	39	32	27
Signs		2	2	1	2
Miscellaneous		<u>17</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>25</u>
<b>Total Permits</b>		<b>196</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>171</b>
<i>Total Construction Value</i>		\$ 31,260,729	\$ 35,798,274	\$ 41,586,616	\$ 20,681,504



In municipalities the size of Douro-Dummer, the number and value of building permits can vary significantly from year to year. One large project such as the Lakefield College School expansion can skew construction values making it a difficult indicator to track as it relates to activity. Construction value is also influenced by inflation related to increased material costs.

## 6.4 Planning Applications

The following summarizes planning applications at the County and Township and other lower tier municipalities.

### Township of Douro Dummer Planning Applications

	Authority	2026 so f	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
<b>Official Plan Amendment</b>	County	0	4	1	0	2	1
<b>Subdivision</b>	County	0	0	0	1	0	1
<b>Zoning By-law Amendment</b>	Township	6	8	15	8	5	17
<b>Minor Variance</b>	Township	4	4	4	6	2	7
<b>Consent</b>	County	5	23	32	17	35	21
<b>Site Plan</b>	Township	2	3	1	0	3	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>48</b>

This represents part of the daily activities in Planning, which would also include plan review of building permit applications, pre-consultations on proposed developments, monitoring of legislative changes to the Planning Act, and general public inquiries.

## 7.0 Questionnaire and Interview Results

Triton received 30 questionnaire responses related to the Building and Planning Service Review. More detailed analysis will be conducted and included in the final report, but the following provides a summary of some general trends:

- 8 responders reported hearing about the building service review from word of mouth, 6 had obtained a building permit before and 7 reported having worked directly with the Department
- 21 responders were familiar or very familiar with building staff
- 12 of 30 responded neutral on satisfaction with the service while 9 were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the service; 6 were satisfied or very satisfied
- Comments noted constant change over in staff, challenging permit experiences, lengthy permit processes, and customer service concerns, accountability were some issues of note
- 11 responders reported hearing about the planning service through word of mouth, 11 read about it in the paper or in social media, 8 work closely with the Department, while 6 had filed planning applications and 6 had pre-consultations
- 21 responders were partly or very familiar with the planning service

- Comments noted change over in the planning service, issues with required reports and testing, duplication with County Planning, and service delays to obtain approvals
- 17 of 30 responded neutral on satisfaction with the service while 5 were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the service; 6 were satisfied or very satisfied
- Responders indicated the top five services for Community Economic Development are:
  1. Encouraging investment in the Township (24)
  2. Support for Agriculture (22)
  3. Promoting the Township (21)
  4. Attracting new business (20)
  5. Reducing red tape (20)
- 24 of 30 responders indicated they believed faster planning and building approvals impact on Township economic development
- 9 of those who responded were familiar or very familiar with County Economic Development initiatives while 16 were slightly familiar or not familiar at all
- 17 respondents were neutral on Township support for tourism promotion while 10 were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- 12 respondents indicated planning and building services should be provided by Township Staff while 12 supported some form of partnership with the County, other Townships or with private contractors to provide the services;
- In terms of the future economic development services there was a suggestion a proper plan was needed, concern about expanding government, the Township is behind other municipalities, money should be spent on roads, permit approval times reduced, no need for septic re-inspection
- 19 responders felt Council only or Council with some delegation to staff should be making decisions on planning applications, other respondents supported full delegation to staff, complete or some delegation to the County
- Responders indicated the top five sources for information about building and planning are:
  1. Township website (22)
  2. Local news or social media (12)
  3. Word of mouth (11)
  4. Attending or watching Council meetings (11)
  5. Township social media (8)
- For future economic development services, concern about expanding government, the Township is behind others, money should be spent on roads, permit approvals are too slow
- 18 respondents indicated they were very interested in more information about the building and planning services if it was easy to find, 5 already had enough information
- Almost half of respondents supported customer service training or increased training for staff
- Most survey respondents hear about the survey from the Township website, heard about it from someone they know or saw at a Council meeting
- Most respondents were directly involved in the field with 9 identifying as contractors, 3 as developers, 9 working in the field and 6 with a college degree

- Final comments were numerous related to the operation but much interest was shown in the results of the review, making permit processes clear, service to taxpayers, consistency in applying the rules, regulation of seasonal rentals, eliminating red tape, investing in arenas, need for Council oversight

Triton has interviewed all five staff members in the Department, four staff in related Departments, the Mayor and Members of Council and five stakeholders.

Triton is also hosting a stakeholder and resident open forum on May 7, 2026, in the Council Chambers at the Township office.

The Township website for the Service Review contains a direct email link to Triton's Senior Planner. So far Triton has received eight stakeholder emails regarding the review.

The questionnaire was helpful in identifying general issues with the building and planning service, interest or support in expanding economic development services, and opportunities to improve. The results are not scientific and require further assessment along with interviews, feedback in the open forum and future public input to get a full sense of the building and planning services. This will form one part of the analysis to be coupled with budget and application activity to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the service.